

PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS IN THE LATINO COMMUNITY:

IMPLICATIONS FOR GOVERNING

THE NEW JERSEY REALITY

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Progress and Prospects in the Latino Community:  
Implications for Grantmaking  
The New Jersey Reality

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## Progress and Prospects in the Latino Community:

### Implications For Grantmaking

#### The New Jersey Reality

June 10, 1992

#### I. Introduction:

The facts and issues presented in this document provide a general profile of the status of Latinos in New Jersey.

While Latinos of New Jersey rank sixth nationally and second in the east coast as it relates to concentration, they have not been able to attract comparable attention from the philanthropic community or other sources that could enable this community to reach economic, social, and political empowerment. It is therefore a tremendous opportunity to present a report outlining those issues that are of most concern to the Latino community with the hope that this will create the interest and possible infusion of resources so desperately needed to enable Latinos in New Jersey to reach parity and therefore be competitive in the 21st century.

First, I would like to inform you about the Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development of the NJ Department of Community Affairs and the role it is playing in the empowerment scenario of the Latino community.

The Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development previously operating under the name: Office of Hispanic Affairs, is located within the State Department of Community Affairs, Trenton, New Jersey.

The original Office of Hispanic Affairs was established in 1975 by Governor Brendan Byrne to address the needs of the Hispanic community, recognizing that it was imperative to pay particular attention to this segment of the population, which had been consistently neglected. The Office was mandated to provide funding, and technical assistance to Hispanic community-based organizations, as well as to keep government and the legislature informed of legislative initiatives with potential impact on the Latino community. From 1975, and up to August of 1991, the Office of Hispanic Affairs's primary function remained the administration of funds awarded to local community-based organizations statewide.

In August of 1991, through persistent advocacy efforts on the part of the Office's Director, Maria Vlacarrando-de Soto, and support stemming from Latino interest groups, the Office's name was changed to The Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development. Under this new name, the role of the Office would be expanded to include research and development activities. This expansion reflects a futuristic vision to create a center for Latino research that would become a central repository of data concerning Latinos nationally, but particularly within the State of New Jersey.

The Center already works with Latino community-based organizations statewide. This expansion allows the Center to look at the status of Latinos statewide more retrospectively, observe and document trends, conduct data collection, and assessment activities. The Center has developed a research data bank and, has begun to collect documents, writings, and readings related to Latinos in many areas. The Center has also created a "Hispanic Leaders Institute" in cooperation with Rutgers University. The purpose of the Institute is to prepare Latino college students for public service and for leadership roles in their community.

The Center's general mandates include:

- The administration of grant dollars to Latino community-based organizations.

- Technical assistance and referral services aimed at empowering Latino community-based organizations.

- Creating training/employment opportunities for Latino college interns (a source of potential leadership).

- Conducting and supporting research on Latinos in New Jersey.

For the past 15 years, modest appropriations have dictated the workplan of the Center to focus primarily on the administration of grants to Hispanic community-based organizations providing direct social services ranging from child care to elderly programs. Despite these limitations, the Center did develop various initiatives that targeted the other components of its mission: Research/Advocacy and Development. Some of these initiatives were as follows:

- THE PUBLISHING OF WHERE ARE THEY?** A report on the underrepresentation of Hispanics in State Government, December 1987.

- AGENCY PROFILES, 1988 and 1991:** A review and assessment of the State of Hispanic community-based organizations in relation to the present social and economic climate and future needs, prepared and distributed to all commissioners and legislators.

- "ENTRING FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE" PROGRAM:** An annual summer program instituted in 1988 to address the need for Hispanic professionals for careers in public service by providing work opportunities for Hispanic college students with government.

- THE HISPANIC LEADERS FELLOWSHIP INSTITUTE-1991:** A program developed in partnership with Rutgers University. The objective was to focus on the skills and leadership development of Hispanic college students and provide the opportunity for policy analysts. A monograph of student articles from the Institute is presently in production by a college review board.

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TRAINING FOR HISPANIC COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS-

These sessions have encompassed grant management, proposal writing, information and referrals and long range planning.

II. Status of Hispanics:

A. Population size/characteristics:

	1980	1990	Increase
Total Population	7,368,001	7,730,185	5.0%
Black Population	918,066	1,008,825	12.7%
Latino Population	491,883	729,861	50.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990

The 50% growth of the Latino community, comparative to the general population, in New Jersey confirms the general comment that Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic group in the State. Latinos are expected to reach the one million mark by the end of the decade and, thus will match or surpass the African-American community in population size. In essence one in every eight (18) New Jerseyans will be Latino.

Although, 85% of Latinos live in Northern New Jersey, the 15% that reside in the Central/Southern regions of the state represent the most significant growth of that population during the last decade (NJ Department of Labor). However, the largest concentration of Latinos in one area is still found in Hudson County where Latinos represent 180,465 or 31.2% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau). Newark remained the municipality with the largest Latino population (71,761 or 26.1% U.S. Census Bureau 1990).

While the smallest concentration of Latinos is found in Salem County (1,438 or 2.2% - U.S. Census Bureau) it should be noted that during the months of April to October, approximately 20,000 Latinos (mainly Puerto Rican farmworkers) move into that area to plant and harvest crops. During this period of time Latinos represent 32% of the population, an issue that should be carefully reviewed for potential impact (CORA, 1990).

The Latino population became further diversified over the past decade. Although Puerto Ricans still dominate, they are rapidly being matched by a collective enclave of Central and Latin American migrants in the State.

Presently the subgroup configuration in New Jersey is as follows:

- Puerto Ricans	43.2%
- Dominicans, Central/South Americans	41.30%
- Cubans	11.8%
- Mexicans	3.8%

#### 03.5. Census Bureau

It should be noted that there is still considerable debate between Latino community leaders and Officials over the issue of undercount during the Census process. However, the present numbers are significant to note the diversity of the subgroup may have profound implications for Latino political participation long range and should be carefully monitored for future reference.

Although Latinos reside in all but five (5) of the 567 municipalities in the state, they are mostly concentrated in urban centers. Approximately 80% of Hispanics reside in the 30 districts designated by the state as distressed areas.

As we look at Latino households in the state we are noting the alarming increase in female headed households which presently comprise 19.7% of Latino households in the State (Dept. of Labor, 1991). This is an increase of 11% over the last decade and an issue for females concern since Latino children have been identified as the most dominant cohort living in poverty. This growth naturally has economic consequences for efforts to improve the quality of life of Latino residents.

Finally, the Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey and the Center are both projecting that by the year 2000, 36% of New Jerseyans Latinos will be less than 20 years of age, 53% will be under 30 years of age and 94% will be less than 45 years of age. However, it should be noted that Latinos 65 years and over are the fastest growing group in the senior citizens population (Dept. of Labor 1991).

#### 8. Employment and Income:

Despite the fact that New Jersey ranks second nationally in per capita income, Latinos in the State do not fare well in the job market compared to non-Latinos.

According to the 80 Dept. of Labor from 1980-1990, the 80 Civilian Labor Force Chart indicates that approximately one in every six new workers added to the labor force was Latino.

While the general pool had an increment of 17% participation rate the Latino labor force participation rate increased by 48% making the rate increase of this cohort higher than the general labor force. The median income of Latino working household was \$12,600 vs the \$20,000 for general population (U.S. Dept. of Labor).

It should be noted however, that despite this reduction in unemployment, Latino workers continue to experience higher unemployment rates than the rest of the State. In 1990 the averaged unemployment rate for Latinos was 8.8% vs 6% for the state, that is 48% higher than that of the general population. With the present recession in NJ it is reasonable to estimate that that rate will average 10.2% for the year end of 1991 (Projection BPC 1990).

With 51% of the Latino population under 25 years, lacking a high school diploma or technical training, this population is relegated to unskilled labor jobs and/or service related occupations. The median income for Latino working household was \$12,600 vs- the \$20,000 for the general population (U.S. Dept. of Labor). The flight of many industries to countries with lesser labor costs and regulations, has had a devastating effect on the Latinos who reside in the urban areas where these industries were located. Thus, the end of 1990 found 2% of New Jersey's living in poverty. Twenty percent (20%) of this cohort were Latinos (NJ Office of Minority Health 1991).

The new immigrants from the Caribbean and Latin America have not enjoyed the same opportunities for work encountered by other groups in earlier decades. Those industries that easily absorbed this population are virtually non-existent. Those with entrepreneurial skills are maintaining some level of income despite the poor economy.

Despite advancements for the agricultural workers resulting from advocacy efforts by the Farmworkers Support Committee, Latinos who dominate that workforce, continue to experience substandard living conditions and economic disenfranchisement. The most recent illustration of this situation was the passage of a legislative bill in April, 1992 calling for the increase of the minimum wage to \$5.06 per hour but specifically exempted farmworkers from benefitting from this regulation.

Finally, employment trends are showing educational attainment alone does not guarantee success. Despite a growing call for diversity in the workforce, Latino professionals are underrepresented in both public and private sectors.

New Jersey government, as one of the state's major employers, is a case in point: Out of a total 76,129 state employees Latinos represent only 3.9% of the workforce. Of these almost three quarters occupy low level clerical, maintenance and other similar positions. Furthermore, in the official/administrative category, Latinos hold only 1.1% of all senior state official positions at the policy making position level.

In addition, the limited number of Latino professionals are stranded in middle management positions with little to no opportunity for advancement that would in turn create vacancies for new Latino hiring (Center for Hispanic Policy Report, 1990). Overall affirmative action efforts, by virtue of grouping minorities in one cluster, have had very limited impact on improving opportunities for Latino professionals. As we move into an international world market clearly, there is a need to create greater opportunities for that pool of educated and skilled Latinos that are graduating from our institutions or migrating to the U.S., seeking a better quality of life.

### C. Educational Attainment:

The issue of education is still a major concern for empowerment in the Latino community and one that must be given top priority if the effects of overall poverty are to be reversed. Over the past four years Latino students (males and females) dropped out of high school at a rate of 19% annually (NJ Dept. of Education, 1990). However, this constitutes those students that officially terminated their relationship with their school or were officially dropped from the school rosters by the school districts.

These statistics do not however take into account the following:

- Students who stop attending classes indefinitely
- Students who terminate indicating that they are leaving the country, and stay within the neighborhood seeking work.
- Students transferred to special programs who then chose not to attend.

Taking all of these factors into consideration, it is the contention of most Hispanic service providers that the actual Latino drop out population is approximately 40%.

This reality underscores a dim future for New Jersey's Latino youth as the most prevalent group for the State's future workforce. Furthermore, the unskilled status of these youth will only exacerbate their predicament as technological advancement continues to supersede manual labor in occupations in the State.

The future is not significantly brighter for those Latinos who complete high school. Ninety percent (90%) of these students attend urban school districts that are resource poor and over crowded. The Quality Education Act of 1990 which mandated priority funding for urban districts equal to their suburban counterparts has not shown demonstrable improvements overall in student performance. School systems frequently place Latino students in educational tracks which are not conducive to preparing them for college. And finally, the limited vocational programs have not provided a reasonable alternative for those Latinos who wish to go directly into the workforce upon graduation.



Compounding the problem is the fact that, the rapid influx of Central and Latin Americans has placed a strain on the State's bilingual education programs, while simultaneously, movements seeking to dismantle the New Jersey Bilingual Education Statute, as well as, English Only advocates have stagnated the growth of these programs in both schools and universities.

A public/private strategy that would strengthen the bilingual/bicultural curriculum, as well as, provide quality college track and relevant vocational training programs are desperately needed. Such a long range effort would ensure that Latinos will be in a competitive position to meet the workforce challenges for the 21st Century.

In addition, the Latino college population has maintained a mere 4% of the total college enrollment in the State. Educational advocates predict that these statistics may be further threatened by the strain on financial assistance programs nationally and statewide as a result of growing eligibility of the general public due to escalating unemployment and financial insecurity as well as attacks on minority geared scholarships.

#### **D. Health Concerns:**

While the issue of quality health care is in the forefront of national concern, so where is it more prevalent than in the Latino community of New Jersey.

The poor socio-economic status of Latinos in NJ has a direct impact on their poor health status. Factors such as the high unemployment rate, and a disproportionate representation of individuals living below the poverty line are indicative of why so many Latinos do not have health care insurance. Access to preventive health care is not the norm in the Latino community. Most frequently, Latinos seek help when their ailments have reached the advance stages and therefore are apt to utilize hospital emergency rooms more than their Caucasian counterparts (National Council of La Raza, 1992).

Besides limited access to health care services, there is the fact that Latinos are underrepresented in the health occupations. This factor impedes on a limited English proficient individual's comfort level to relate their health needs.

Finally, the leading cause of death of Latinos is difficult to ascertain due to the methodology used by the state which does not provide distinct breakdowns of minority groups. However, it is clear that behavioral risk factors play a dominant role with Latino males.

#### **E. Political Participation:**

Latinos in New Jersey as an emerging political power are being carefully monitored by the Latino and general leadership of the State.

There is no clear cut pattern to this development. While Latinos are severely underrepresented in the State Legislature (2 out of 130 Legislators total) they are making strides in local elections, primarily in Boards of Education.

In municipalities, Latinos are beginning to gain representation on City Councils and presently boast three (3) mayors.

However, documented election fraud, intimidation of newly registered voters by poll workers and limited resources have impeded on the ability of the Latinos to realize their full potential.

It should also be noted that there are several factors that will hopefully advance Latino participation by the end of the decade:

- 1) The maturation of its predominant school age population.
- 2) The naturalization of its non-citizen members.
- 3) The continued utilization of Latino lawyers in seeking legal recourse against electoral fraud and abuse.
- 4) The emergence of Latino networks to advocate for representation in policy making bodies.

#### F. Latino NGOs

There are approximately 50 established Latino agencies in the State of New Jersey. The definition of "established" in this case refers to agencies that have 501 (c) 3 status and are registered with the Department of State.

The Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development presently funds 27 or 50% of these agencies. With a budget of approximately \$1.5 million the Center provides grants in aid that serve primarily as a downer match for grant contracts established between the Latino agencies and the Division of Youth and Family Services of the Department of Human Services. Due to budgetary constraints, the Center provides a limited number of straight grants for innovative new proposals.

These agencies are located in the three regions of the State with 40% located in the North. The other 40% are an indication of the growth pattern of the Latino population in the Central and Southern regions.

The Latino community-based organizations serve a critical role in that community. In fact, these agencies have been referred to as the "lifeline" of that population because of the relationship of its existence to the evolving needs and development of that target group. In this context, a profile was developed to highlight the status of these agencies as they seek to meet the growing demand by this burgeoning community.

The growth of the Latino community and its impact on the State of New Jersey warrants careful review. As part of that process it is critical to address the important role that the Latino agency plays in such a plan. The following profile will hopefully give policy makers an understanding of this sector and a desire to develop stronger partnerships with them to address the future role of the State as it relates to this population.

The questionnaire was completed by 24 out of the 27 agencies funded by the Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development and these were the highlights:

\*The Latino community-based organizations (CBO's) were established in the period between 1968-1988. The average existence of the Latino CBO is presently 20 years.

The types of services/programs offered by agencies:

- Youth Services
- Senior Citizens Services
- Job Referral/Placement
- Multi-Services
- Food Emergency
- Protective Services
- Substance Abuse Prevention Programs
- Immigration and Naturalization +
- Day Care Services
- Housing Assistance
- Economic Development ++
- Weatherization
- Child Abuse Prevention Programs
- Bast Family Programs
- Abuse Education/Prevention Programs
- Affordable Housing Projects ++

+ CBO's have experienced an increase in this service area since the passage of the Immigration amnesty program.

++ 9% of Latino CBO's have undertaken housing and economic development projects in the past three to five years.

\* The total number of unduplicated clients served in 1990 was 96,965. This was an increase of 27 % over 1988.

+ 3 out of the 24 agencies reporting have satellite offices to meet the needs of the Hispanic community in their areas. In 1988, only 4 agencies reported satellite offices. 4 other agencies stated that they would establish satellite operations to meet the demand for services if the resources were made available.

\* 50% of the agencies reported that their budgets are composed 100% of government funding and that attempts to secure private funding has been futile. The other 50% reported that non-government funding composed 10-25% of their funding. They also identified United Way as the main source of private funding. Those agencies indicating some success in obtaining corporate/foundation funding were located primarily in four counties: Essex, Bergen, Hudson and Mercer. However, corporate support decreased for these agencies in 1990.

\* 95% of the agencies reporting stated that due to budgetary constraints, the average salary of their workers made most of the employees eligible for foodstamps and other entitlement programs. Furthermore, the salaries attracted candidates with less credentials than desired requiring extensive staff training. Finally, they stated that the limited resources required the over extension of staff in performing the services as well as administrative requirements of programs.

\* 40% of the agencies indicated that they have developed agency plans that extended from one to four years. Another 15% indicated that their boards were in the process of developing long range plans. The remainder cited a desire to follow suits if the technical assistance could be provided.

\* All 24 agencies indicated a need for technical assistance ranging from fiscal management and reporting to fundraising. There was a strong emphasis on the need for technology for program data base management to allow for more time for service delivery.

\* Agencies indicated that the areas of greatest service need were prioritized as: Education, Employment, Affordable Housing/Hotels, Emergency Food and Access to Health Services.

\* Agencies noted their systemic exclusion from the local social service networks, that have traditionally garnered the state and federal grants programs, as an area that must be addressed to ensure equity in funding. The agencies cited the growth of the Hispanic populations as a justification for expeditious action. Their argument is that the increased demand from the Latino community for services is not being addressed by the mainstream agencies.

\* The agencies noted that some of the federal/state programs need to be tailored to assist the limited English proficient Latinos who also have educational limitations. One program cited was JTRA/PEC. The time tables for training and placement were considered unrealistic and unworkable for this population.

### III. Conclusion/Recommendation

In general terms the Latino community is a vibrant community with tremendous potential to play a significant role in the advancement of life in New Jersey. However, it is clear that it will need many of the services and opportunities historically afforded other groups in order to reach economic, social and political parity.

The Latino community has had difficulty competing for their "fair share" from foundations, corporations and United Way organizations in NJ. Part of the problem is the use of the universal term of "minority programs" for funding purposes. In the State of New Jersey the term "minority" most often translates into "African-Americans".

Furthermore, commissions created at community levels for the purposes of obtaining funds for specific programs have traditionally excluded Latino agencies despite the fact that the growth in the service populations has been mainly Latino.

Clearly, any infusion of dollars into the Latino community should be executed in partnership with that community with a focus on four possible areas:

- Education
- Economic Development
- Community Development
- Youth and Family Services

The partnership to be created should incorporate the Latino CBOs' as major stakeholders in planning goals and prioritizing areas of need. A network presently exists of Latino CBOs' as well as organizations that can play a major role in the strategic planning of a Latino agenda.

Furthermore, government can and should play a role in the partnership established. It would be feasible and recommended to establish a statewide task force that would include representatives from those state agencies that manage the services and resources most needed in the Latino community. These departments include Human Services, Health, Community Affairs, Education, Law Enforcement and Commerce.

These agencies can create Latino focused initiatives within their respective departments that could leverage the resources from the foundation community.

The Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development stands willing to serve as a coordinator in bring the Latino network and state agencies into the scenario with the philanthropic community.

In closing, the Latino community of New Jersey is at a juncture of development that is ripe for intervention. Solid planning and effective strategic initiatives can ensure the empowerment of this community to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

## APPENDICES

### LIST OF FUNDED AGENCIES

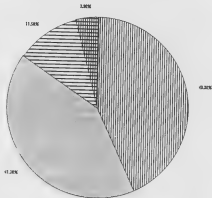
1. New Jersey Map
2. Latino Subgroup Breakdown in New Jersey
3. Latino Growth Projection
4. Latino -vs- General Population Growth Rate
5. List of Agencies Funded by Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development

1. COUNTY OF NEW JERSEY  
 2. COUNTY OF NEW JERSEY  
 3. COUNTY OF NEW JERSEY  
 4. COUNTY OF NEW JERSEY  
 5. COUNTY OF NEW JERSEY



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
 DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
 DIVISION OF STATE AND REGIONAL PLANNING

# HISPANIC SUBGROUPS IN NEW JERSEY



☒ Puerto Rican

☐ Dominican/Central &  
South American

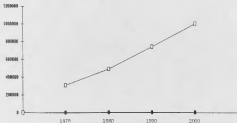
☐ Cuban

☒ Mexican/Other

Source: 1990 Census of Population, U.S. Census Bureau



# LATINO GROWTH PROJECTIONS



1970 - 340,000

1980 - 404,000

1990 - 739,764

2000 - 1,008,893

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990  
Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development

RATE OF GROWTH  
LATINO vs. GENERAL POPULATION

	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>% of Increase</u>
Total Population	7,365,011	7,730,185	5.0
Black Population	925,006	1,036,825	12.1
Latino Population	491,883	739,861	50.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, (1990).

# HISPANIC AGENCIES LIST

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